SUPERMAN
DC
NATIONAL COMICS
CHALLENGERS
OF THE
UNKNOWN
12¢
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
JULY
NO. 32
The blazing VOLCANO MAN returns, and-- "ONE CHALLENGER MUST DIE!"
YOU AND PROF BETTER LET ACE ALONE, RED! HE'S GOT THE ONLY PLAN THAT CAN DESTROY THE VOLCANO MAN!
NO--MINE IS BETTER, AND RED AND I WILL PROVE IT EVEN IF WE HAVE TO CLOBBER YOU BOTH!

NOT WANTED: HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS!

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ONE BY ONE, THE FAMED TEAM FELL APART--NOT OUT OF PETTY JEALOUSIES OR SPITE, BUT FROM A COURAGEOUS DETERMINATION BY EACH TO PROTECT THE LIVES OF THE OTHERS! FOR IT WAS KNOWN THAT BEFORE THIS DANGEROUS MISSION WAS ENDED...

ONE CHALLENGER MUST DIE!

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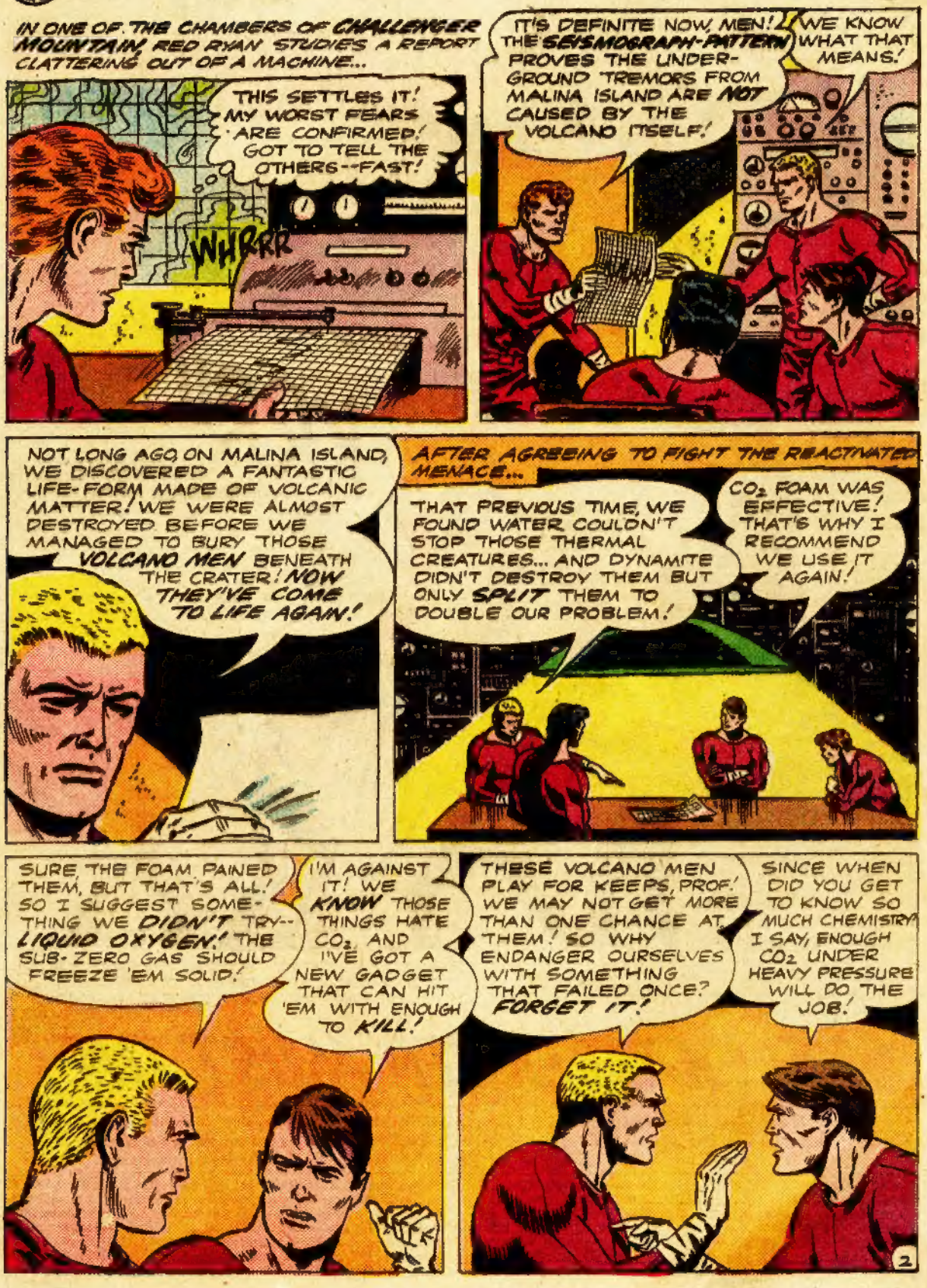
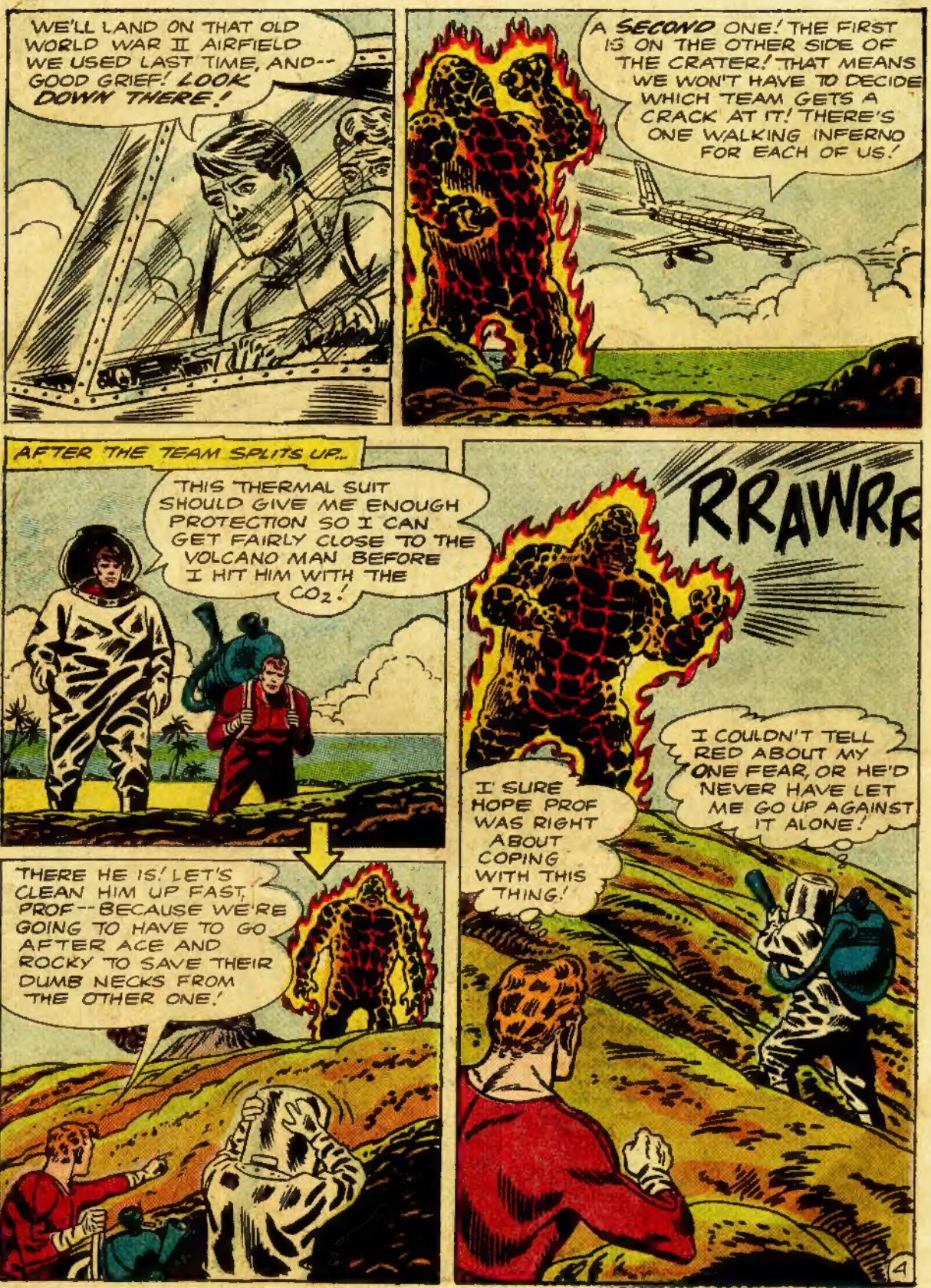
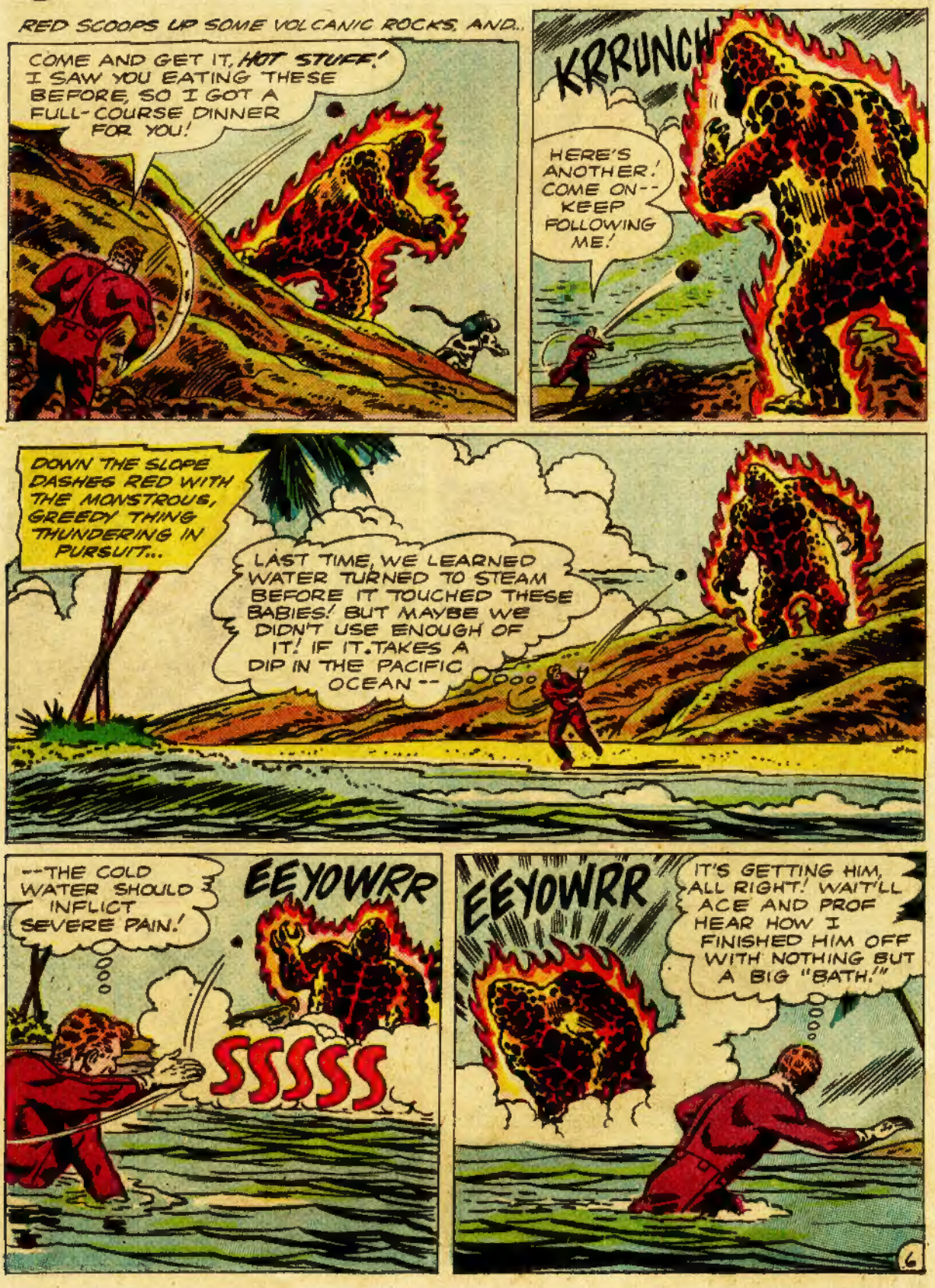

IN ONE OF THE CHAMBERS OF CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN, RED RYAN STUDIES A REPORT CLATTERING OUT OF A MACHINE...
THIS SETTLES IT! MY WORST FEARS ARE CONFIRMED! GOT TO TELL THE OTHERS--FAST!
WHRRR
IT'S DEFINITE NOW, MEN! THE SEISMOGRAPH-PATTERN PROVES THE UNDER-GROUND TREMORS FROM MALINA ISLAND ARE NOT CAUSED BY THE VOLCANO ITSELF!
WE KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!
NOT LONG AGO ON MALINA ISLAND, WE DISCOVERED A FANTASTIC LIFE-FORM MADE OF VOLCANIC MATTER! WE WERE ALMOST DESTROYED BEFORE WE MANAGED TO BURY THOSE VOLCANO MEN BENEATH THE CRATER! NOW THEY'VE COME TO LIFE AGAIN!
AFTER AGREEING TO FIGHT THE REACTIVATED MENACE...
THAT PREVIOUS TIME, WE FOUND WATER COULDN'T STOP THOSE THERMAL CREATURES... AND DYNAMITE DIDN'T DESTROY THEM BUT ONLY SPLIT THEM TO DOUBLE OUR PROBLEM!
CO_2 FOAM WAS EFFECTIVE! THAT'S WHY I RECOMMEND WE USE IT AGAIN!
SURE THE FOAM PAINED THEM, BUT THAT'S ALL! SO I SUGGEST SOME-THING WE DIDN'T TRY-- LIQUID OXYGEN! THE SUB-ZERO GAS SHOULD FREEZE 'EM SOLID!
I'M AGAINST IT! WE KNOW THOSE THINGS HATE CO_2 AND I'VE GOT A NEW GADGET THAT CAN HIT 'EM WITH ENOUGH TO KILL!
THESE VOLCANO MEN PLAY FOR KEEPS, PROF! WE MAY NOT GET MORE THAN ONE CHANCE AT THEM! SO WHY ENDANGER OURSELVES WITH SOMETHING THAT FAILED ONCE? FORGET IT!
SINCE WHEN DID YOU GET TO KNOW SO MUCH CHEMISTRY? I SAY, ENOUGH CO_2 UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE WILL DO THE JOB!
2

ANY TIME I NEED YOUR ADVICE, I'LL ASK FOR IT!
SIMMER DOWN, PROF! ACE JUST DOESN'T THINK YOUR PLAN WILL WORK! IT'S KOOKIE TO ME, TOO!
OH, YEAH? LOOK WHO'S SUDDENLY BECOME A BRAIN! ME--I'M WITH PROF!
HOLD IT, FELLERS! WE CAN REACH SOME KIND OF COMPROMISE!
NOT WITH ME YOU CAN'T! WE'RE PULLING OUT FOR MALINA AT DAWN! IF YOU WANT TO SHARE THE PLANE WITH US, THAT'S OKAY! BUT STAY OUT OF MY WAY!
AS THEY APPROACH MALINA...
THERE IT IS--THE HOTTEST BUNDLE OF TERROR THAT EVER WALKED THE EARTH! STAY OUT OF OUR WAY, ACE! YOU, TOO, ROCKY! RED AND I'LL HANDLE EVERYTHING!
DON'T ORDER US, PROF! IF ACE SAYS HE AND I TACKLE IT, THAT'S HOW IT'LL BE!
THROUGH THE LONG, SILENT FLIGHT, TROUBLED THOUGHTS CHARGE THE AIR...
ACE CAN'T REALIZE HOW DANGEROUS HIS PLAN IS! THAT'S WHY I'VE GOT TO STOP THE VOLCANO MEN TO SAVE HIM! ONLY ONE TROUBLE--MY PLAN'S GOT A SUICIDE HAZARD, TOO!
PROF HASN'T GUESSED HOW DANGEROUS MY SCHEME IS OR HE'D HAVE SAID SOMETHING! BUT I'VE GOT TO TAKE THE CHANCE--FOR THE SAKE OF THE OTHERS!


WE'LL LAND ON THAT OLD WORLD WAR II AIRFIELD WE USED LAST TIME, AND-- GOOD GRIEF! LOOK DOWN THERE!
A SECOND ONE! THE FIRST IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CRATER! THAT MEANS WE WON'T HAVE TO DECIDE WHICH TEAM GETS A CRACK AT IT! THERE'S ONE WALKING INFERNO FOR EACH OF US!
AFTER THE TEAM SPLITS UP...
THIS THERMAL SUIT SHOULD GIVE ME ENOUGH PROTECTION SO I CAN GET FAIRLY CLOSE TO THE VOLCANO MAN BEFORE I HIT HIM WITH THE CO_2!
RRAWRR
I COULDN'T TELL RED ABOUT MY ONE FEAR, OR HE'D NEVER HAVE LET ME GO UP AGAINST IT ALONE!
I SURE HOPE PROF WAS RIGHT ABOUT COPING WITH THIS THING!
THERE HE IS! LET'S CLEAN HIM UP FAST, PROF--BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO AFTER ACE AND ROCKY TO SAVE THEIR DUMB NECKS FROM THE OTHER ONE!
4

MY PLAN WILL WORK ONLY IF I'M VERY CLOSE TO IT WHEN I RELEASE THE FOAM!... WHEW! I CAN FEEL THE HEAT ALREADY!
THIS IS WHAT I WAS AFRAID OF--EVEN MY SUIT DOESN'T PROTECT ME FROM THE INTENSE HEAT!...I'M--I'M GETTING...WEAK...BUT I'M ALMOST IN... POSITION NOW! HERE GOES--!
A HIGH-CHARGED STREAM OF CO_2 FOAM STREAKS STRAIGHT TOWARD THE MOLTEN MENACE...
FWOOSH
GREAT SCOTT! THE HEAT INSTANTLY BAKED THE FOAM INTO A SOLID! I-I-I'VE FAILED!
CRASH
AWWRRR
SHATTERED IT WITH A SINGLE SWIPE!
OH-OH! PROF'S IN REAL TROUBLE NOW! I'VE GOT A LITTLE SCHEME OF MY OWN THAT MIGHT GET THE VOLCANO MAN OFF HIS BACK--BUT PUT HIM RIGHT ON MINE!
AWRRR


RED SCOOPS UP SOME VOLCANIC ROCKS, AND..
COME AND GET IT, HOT STUFF! I SAW YOU EATING THESE BEFORE, SO I GOT A FULL-COURSE DINNER FOR YOU!
KRRUNCH
HERE'S ANOTHER! COME ON-- KEEP FOLLOWING ME!
DOWN THE SLOPE DASHES RED WITH THE MONSTROUS, GREEDY THING THUNDERING IN PURSUIT...
LAST TIME, WE LEARNED WATER TURNED TO STEAM BEFORE IT TOUCHED THESE BABIES! BUT MAYBE WE DIDN'T USE ENOUGH OF IT! IF IT TAKES A DIP IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN --
--THE COLD WATER SHOULD INFLICT SEVERE PAIN!
EEYOWRR
SSSSS
EEYOWRR
IT'S GETTING HIM, ALL RIGHT! WAIT'LL ACE AND PROF HEAR HOW I FINISHED HIM OFF WITH NOTHING BUT A BIG "BATH!"

BUT AS RED LOOKS BACK FROM SHORE...
OH--NO! HE RECOVERED FROM THE INITIAL SHOCK... HIS HEAT'S BOILING THE WATER! GUESS THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP THAT THING!
BUBBLE BUBBLE
MEANWHILE, ACE ATTACKS THE SECOND VOLCANO CREATURE...
IF I'M RIGHT, THE COLD OF THE LIQUID OXYGEN WILL PROTECT ME AGAINST HIS HEAT!
EEOWRRR
GOOD! HE DIDN'T LIKE THAT ONE BIT-- BUT I'VE GOT TO GET IN CLOSER TO DO THE JOB! THERE'S THAT ONE DANGER-- BUT I HAVE TO TAKE THE CHANCE!
FRRZZZ
MOVING IN CAUTIOUSLY, ACE TURNS UP THE PRESSURE...
BAROOM
RESCUED BY ROCKY, ACE EXPLAINS...
THAT'S WHAT I 'PUFF-PUFF!' WAS AFRAID WOULD HAPPEN! THE INTENSE, CONCENTRATED EXTREMES OF COLD AND HEAT MET IN FULL FORCE AND CAUSED THAT EXPLOSION!
ACE KNEW THAT COULD HAPPEN ALL ALONG AND STILL HE RISKED IT--WITHOUT SAYING A WORD TO ANY OF US! WHAT A GUY!
HE'S HEADING TOWARDS HIS BUDDY! WE KNOW THEY CAN BE SPLIT IN TWO! BUT SUPPOSE THEY CAN ALSO MERGE TO FORM ONE TWICE AS BIG! ROCKY-- WE'VE GOT TO WARN PROF AND RED!

SOON AFTER...
I THOUGHT OF THE SAME THING! THOSE TWO ARE GOING TO FUSE INTO ONE GIANT THREAT!
LOOK--WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME! WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO ABOUT IT?
TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING!
ACE WOULD'VE FINISHED OUR CHARACTER IF HE'D GOTTEN CLOSER WITH THE FRIGID-GAS! WELL, I'M GONNA GET PLENTY CLOSE -- AND DON'T ANY OF YOU TRY TO STOP ME! YOU GUYS NEVER SAW THE DAY YOU COULD WHIP ME!
KRRRUSSH
WOWEE! LOOK AT THAT! IF WE COULDN'T STOP THE SMALLER VERSION, WHAT'LL WE DO NOW?
I'LL TELL YOU! BETTER STILL--I'LL SHOW YOU!
MAYBE NOT INDIVIDUALLY! SURE, YOU COULD LICK US ONE AT A TIME -- BUT NOT ALL AT ONCE!

DON'T FEEL BAD, PAL. IT TOOK THREE OF US TO DO IT!
OOOOF!

WHAT CHUMPS WE'VE BEEN! TEAMWORK WAS THE ANSWER ALL ALONG! WE COULDN'T BEAT THE VOLCANO MEN SEPARATELY, BUT WE CAN--TOGETHER!

THE LIQUID OXYGEN WILL GIVE US A SCREEN OF COLD AIR LONG ENOUGH FOR YOU TO SPRAY THE CO_2 DIRECTLY ON HIM!
LET'S HOPE IT WORKS! WE MAY NOT LIVE TO GET ANOTHER CHANCE!

SLOWLY THE FOUR ADVANCE BEHIND A SCREEN OF FRIGID GAS...
THIS IS AS CLOSE AS WE CAN GET BEFORE THE EXTREME TEMPERATURES CAUSE ANOTHER BLAST!
IT'S JUST ABOUT CLOSE ENOUGH FOR ME TO HIT IT WITH THE CO_2 BEFORE THE HEAT CAN BAKE IT SOLID! KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED, CHUMS!

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COSMO, THE LITTLE CREATURE FROM SPACE, WAS FOUND AND ADOPTED AS A PET BY THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN! MORE THAN A PET, HE PROVED A LIFE-SAVER ON NUMEROUS OF THEIR PERILOUS ADVENTURES! BUT WHEN A SITUATION OCCURS THAT TESTS HIS LOYALTY, THE CHALLENGERS ARE SHOCKED TO LEARN THAT...
COSMO TURNS TRAITOR
CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN
MASTERMIND CHANGED US WITH HIS SUBSTANCE-CONVERTER! I CAN ONLY FLOAT HELPLESSLY-- AND THE OTHERS ARE IN TROUBLE, TOO!
I'M BEING BLOWN LIKE A SLIP OF PAPER BY A WIND CREATED BY RED-- BLOWN RIGHT TOWARDS ROCKY'S FLAMES!

"MASTERMIND," CUNNING NEW LORD OF THE UNDERWORLD, MAKES A DARING BID TO OUT-RACE THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN ON A PERILOUS MOUNTAIN ROAD...

IF WE GET CLOSE ENOUGH, COSMO CAN BRAKE 'EM TO A HALT WITH ONE OF HIS RAYS! CAN'T YOU, BOY?

SQUNK!

THE DRIVER OF THE FLEEING CAR TRIES TO NEGOTIATE A HAIRPIN CURVE..

YOU IDIOT! SLOW DOWN!

I'M TRYING TO, BOSS -- I'M TRYING TO!

THE SEDAN SMASHES THROUGH A GUARD-RAIL, HEADED FOR DESTRUCTION 300 FEET BELOW...

CRASH

WE'RE GONERS!

BUT, MIRACULOUSLY, INSTEAD OF PLUNGING, THE CAR SUDDENLY BECOMES SUSPENDED IN MID-AIR...

WHAT HAPPENED?

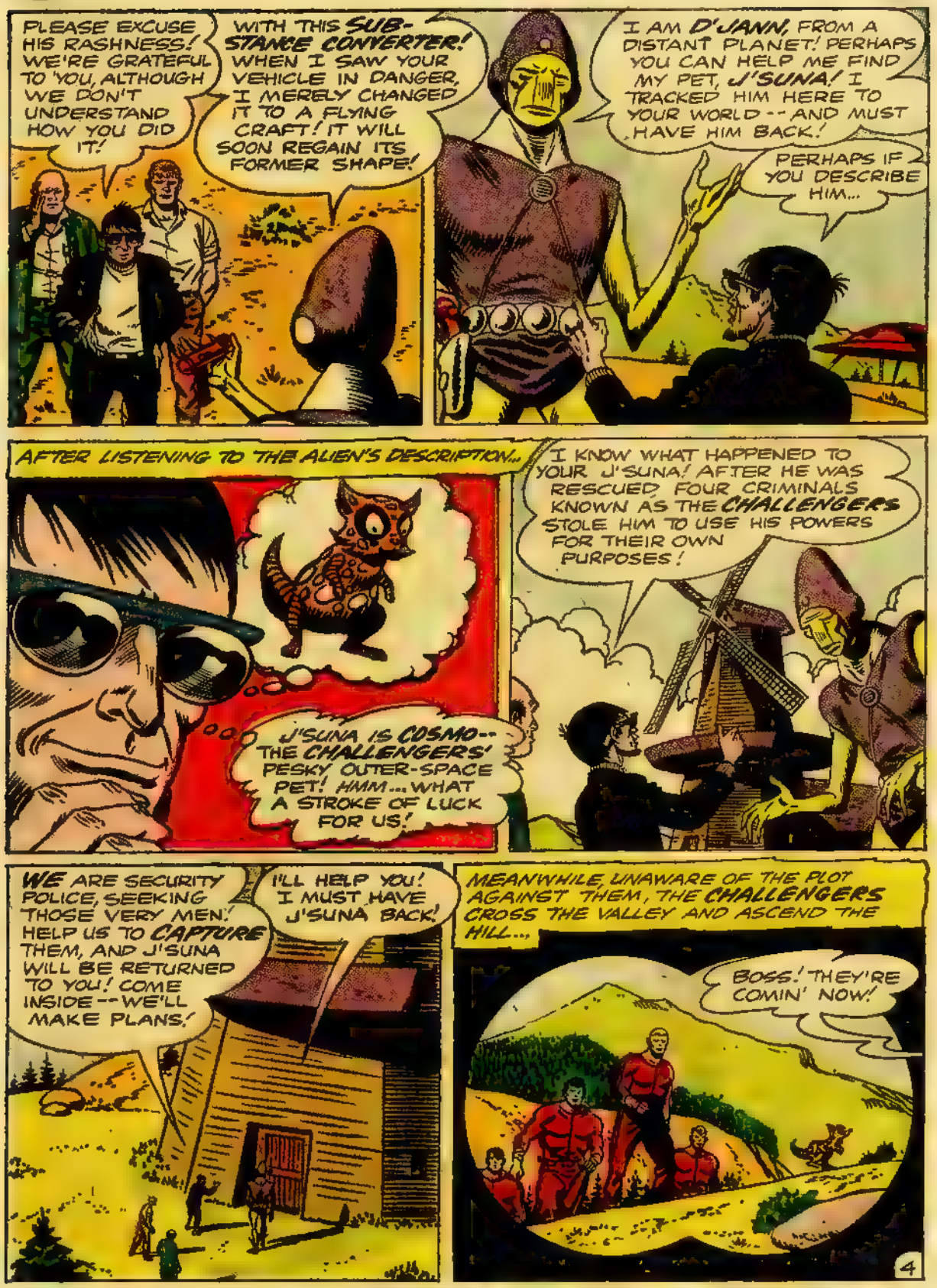
DON'T KNOW! THIS CAN'T BE REAL!

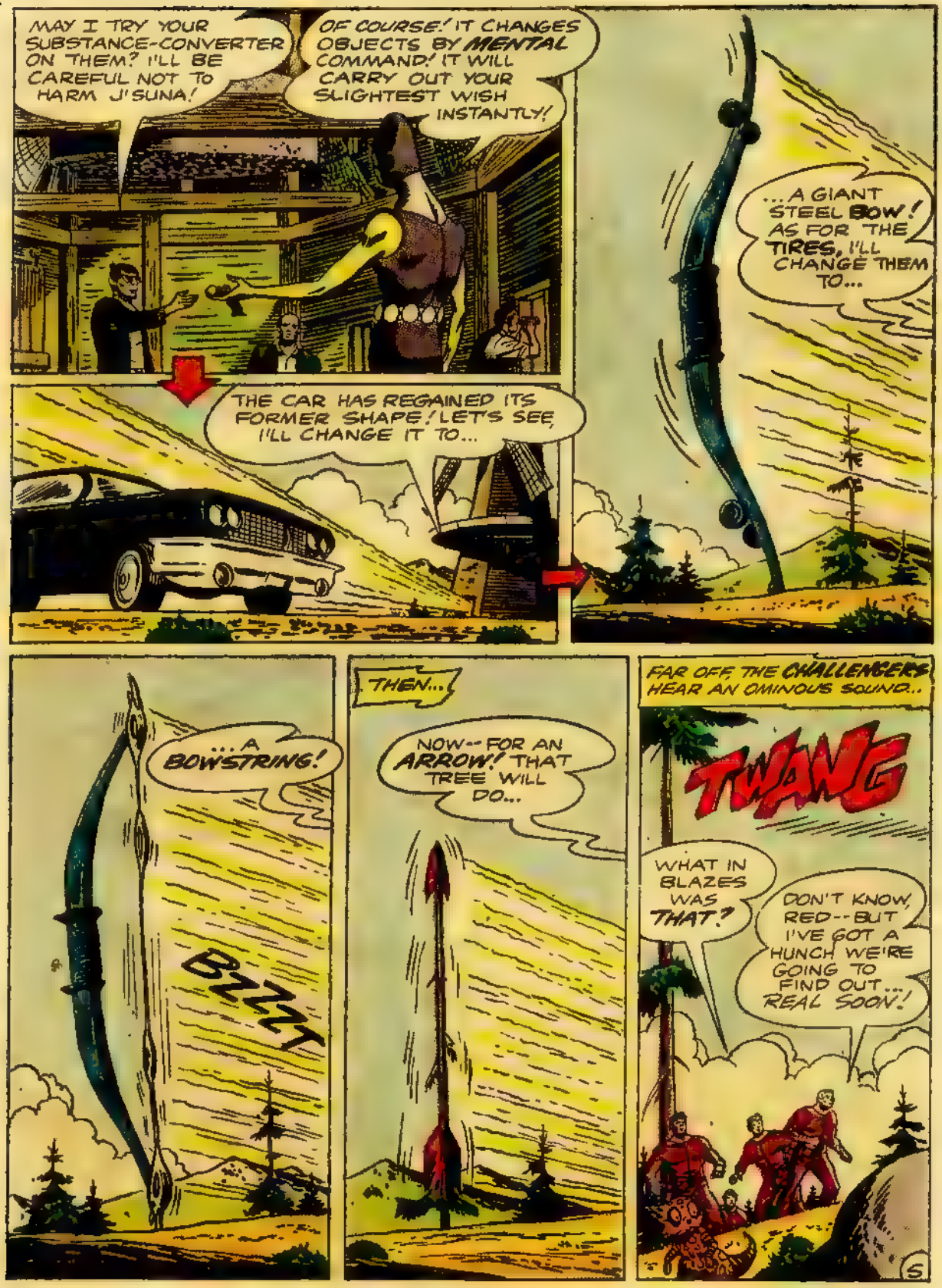
TO THEIR ADDED BEWILDERMENT, A STRANGE TRANSFORMATION BEGINS...

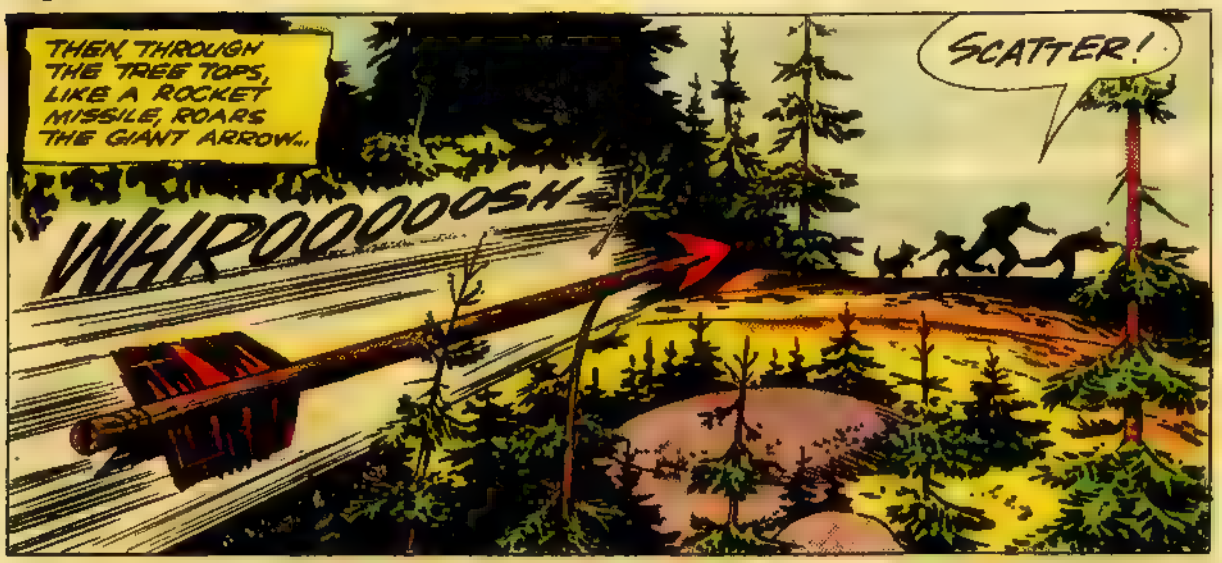
...SWIFTLY ALTERING THE VEHICLE INTO...

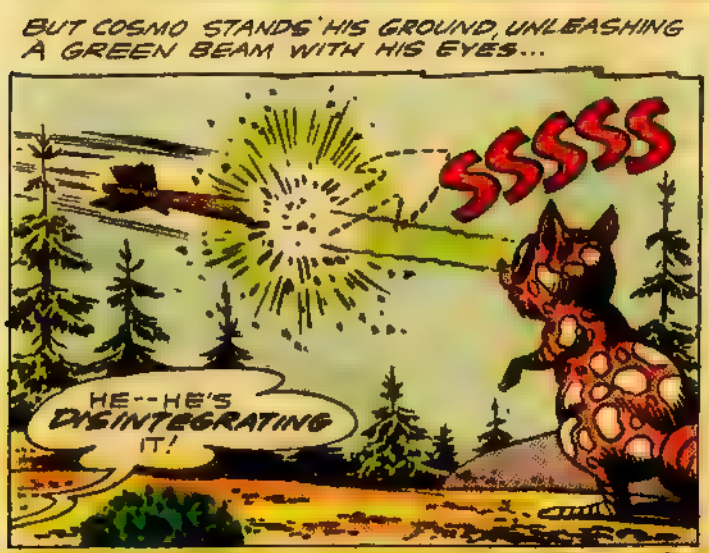
...A BIZARRE AIRCRAFT!

WHEN THE CHALLENGERS SCREECH TO A HALT...
HEY! WHAT KIND OF A KOOKIE CAR WERE WE CHASIN'? LOOK WHAT IT TURNED INTO!
SKIMMING THROUGH THE AIR, THE CRAFT LANDS IN A CLEARING...
WE'RE NEAR OUR HIDEOUT, WHAT PLAYS— AND WHO'S HE?
WHOEVER HE IS, HE MUST'VE SAVED OUR NECKS!
LOOK AT THAT WEAPON, BOSS! IF HE'S GOING TO TRY TO BLAST US, I'LL GET HIM FIRST!
BUT BEFORE THE THUG CAN TRIGGER HIS GUN...
HALF-WIT! HE WOULDN'T HARM US AFTER SAVING US!
SLAP
BESIDES, I'M INTERESTED IN THAT DEVICE. MAYBE WE CAN USE IT!
3

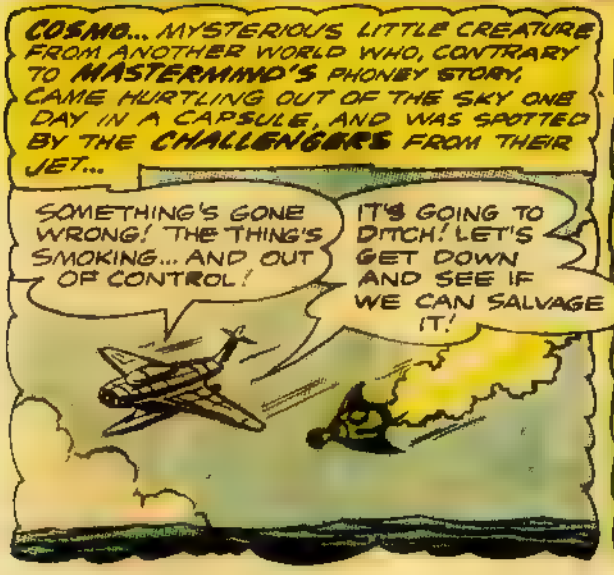

PLEASE EXCUSE HIS RASHNESS! WE'RE GRATEFUL TO YOU, ALTHOUGH WE DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU DID IT!
WITH THIS SUB-STANCE CONVERTER! WHEN I SAW YOUR VEHICLE IN DANGER, I MERELY CHANGED IT TO A FLYING CRAFT! IT WILL SOON REGAIN ITS FORMER SHAPE!
I AM D'JANN, FROM A DISTANT PLANET! PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP ME FIND MY PET, J'SUNA! I TRACKED HIM HERE TO YOUR WORLD -- AND MUST HAVE HIM BACK!
PERHAPS IF YOU DESCRIBE HIM...
AFTER LISTENING TO THE ALIEN'S DESCRIPTION...
J'SUNA IS COSMO -- THE CHALLENGERS' PESKY OUTER-SPACE PET! HMM... WHAT A STROKE OF LUCK FOR US!
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR J'SUNA! AFTER HE WAS RESCUED, FOUR CRIMINALS KNOWN AS THE CHALLENGERS STOLE HIM TO USE HIS POWERS FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES!
WE ARE SECURITY POLICE, SEEKING THOSE VERY MEN! HELP US TO CAPTURE THEM, AND J'SUNA WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU! COME INSIDE -- WE'LL MAKE PLANS!
I'LL HELP YOU! I MUST HAVE J'SUNA BACK!
MEANWHILE, UNAWARE OF THE PLOT AGAINST THEM, THE CHALLENGERS CROSS THE VALLEY AND ASCEND THE HILL...
BOSS! THEY'RE COMIN' NOW!

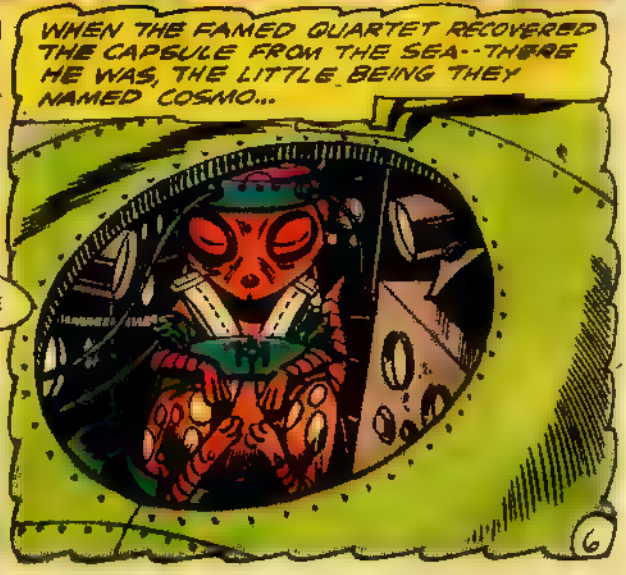

MAY I TRY YOUR SUBSTANCE-CONVERTER ON THEM? I'LL BE CAREFUL NOT TO HARM J'SUNA!
OF COURSE! IT CHANGES OBJECTS BY MENTAL COMMAND! IT WILL CARRY OUT YOUR SLIGHTEST WISH INSTANTLY!
...A GIANT STEEL BOW! AS FOR THE TIRES, I'LL CHANGE THEM TO...
THE CAR HAS REGAINED ITS FORMER SHAPE! LET'S SEE, I'LL CHANGE IT TO...
...A BOWSTRING!
BZZT
THEN...
NOW--FOR AN ARROW! THAT TREE WILL DO...
FAR OFF, THE CHALLENGERS HEAR AN OMINOUS SOUND...
TWANG
WHAT IN BLAZES WAS THAT?
DON'T KNOW, RED--BUT I'VE GOT A HUNCH WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT... REAL SOON!


THEN, THROUGH THE TREE TOPS, LIKE A ROCKET MISSILE, ROARS THE GIANT ARROW...
WHROOOOOSH
SCATTER!


BUT COSMO STANDS HIS GROUND, UNLEASHING A GREEN BEAM WITH HIS EYES...
SSSSS
HE--HE'S DISINTEGRATING IT!

THAT'S OUR BOY! WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY WITH YOU AROUND, DO WE?
SQUNK-SQUNK!


COSMO... MYSTERIOUS LITTLE CREATURE FROM ANOTHER WORLD WHO, CONTRARY TO MASTERMIND'S PHONEY STORY, CAME HURTLING OUT OF THE SKY ONE DAY IN A CAPSULE, AND WAS SPOTTED BY THE CHALLENGERS FROM THEIR JET...
SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG! THE THING'S SMOKING... AND OUT OF CONTROL!
IT'S GOING TO DITCH! LET'S GET DOWN AND SEE IF WE CAN SALVAGE IT!


WHEN THE FAMED QUARTET RECOVERED THE CAPSULE FROM THE SEA--THERE HE WAS, THE LITTLE BEING THEY NAMED COSMO...
6

NOW, CREEPING FORWARD WITH THEIR PET, THE CHALLENGERS SPOT THE ABANDONED WINDMILL.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, ACE?
THERE'S THE BIG BOW THAT FIRED THAT HUGE ARROW AT US! CHANCES ARE THAT THE WINDMILL IS MASTERMIND'S HIDEOUT!
SUDDENLY, A BEAM FROM THE WINDMILL STRIKES JAGGED ROCKS ON A NEARBY RISE.
BZZT-BZZT
WHAT'S GOIN' ON? I DON'T LIKE THIS!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO THOSE BOULDERS!
CHANGED INTO GREAT SPHERES, THEY ROLL TOWARDS THE CHALLENGERS FASTER... FASTER...
RUN FOR IT!
BUT AGAIN, THEIR SMALL SPACE PET SUMMONS HIS POWERS...
LOOK AT COSMO, FELLERS! HE DIVERTED THEM FROM US!
THAT PESKY COSMO! HIS POWERS ARE THWARTING US! BUT I HAVE AN IDEA-- WE'LL LET THE CHALLENGERS REACH US!
7
CONTINUED ON 4TH PAGE FOLLOWING...

CHALLENGERS' MAIL CHUTE

Dear Challengers: I have almost all of the issues of the *Challengers*, and they seem to be getting better as they go along, that is, if you can improve a feature as excellent as this. The March issue of "Multi-Man" was tops, with "The 5th Challenger" running a close second. They offered a good contrast. What also spurred my interest is the Letters Page. I'd have preferred comments on the comics contents rather than questions-and-answers. Do readers agree with me?

Buddy Saunders, Arlington, Tex.

Yes and no, so you'll have to leave it to our editorial judgment. We'll publish the most interesting letters.

* * *

CHIT-CHAT FROM THE MAIL CHUTE: Harley Standridge of Temple, Okla., pens that he and three pals are starting a *Challengers* Club. Ditto Kevin Mattison and Jerry Byrns of New Brunswick, N. J. . . . Aside to Bobby Pelzel and a score of others who've inquired: script credit for all stories is shared by Arnold Drake and France Herron. . . . Memo to all readers, especially you, Robert Reynard of Inglewood, Calif.: please include your full address when writing. . . . Personal to Wayne McCaden of Baltimore, Md.: Artist Bob Brown's thrilling autobiography was printed in Issue No. 27!

Anyone for TV? Fans have been deluging us with appeals to get our *Challengers* on television, and one day a smart producer might realize the value in doing such a thing. But it's Paul De Norio of Mastic Beach, N. Y., who makes the job simpler by doing the casting for the series. Here are Paul's choices for the parts: Ace: Roger Smith; Rocky: Jack Lord; Red: Edd Byrnes; Prof: Lloyd Bridges; June: ? You agree, or have better ideas?

* * *

Dear Challengers: Since the first time they joined forces, our boys have resolutely worked together, braving all dangers of nature, man and the world's most insidious villains. Once, we saw them split into two teams in a phony kind of war, but was the team ever threatened with the departure of one of the members?

Hoyt Mallary, St. Louis, Mo.

"The Challenger Who Quit"—and we won't tell you who it is!—answers your question in the next issue, No. 33, Aug.-Sept.

* * *

"Here's one of the best, or should I say, most evil, villains in the comic world, this arch-foe of the *Challengers*, Multi-Man," types Tom Jones of Aberdeen, Md. "He belongs in a class of his own, along with Kanjar Po *(JLA)*, The Joker *(Batman)* and Brainiac *(Superman)*. Must also compliment you on the dramatic cover, appearing on Issue No. 30. . . . Yet another tireless correspondent, Paul Gambaccini of Westport, Conn., complains that Multi-Man's becoming stale to him while saluting the superb artwork of Bob Brown, which he compares to the "Lee-Elias-of-the-'40s-style." Paul also didn't appreciate Gaylord bowing out as a *Challenger* candidate with the admission: "I'm not really cut out to be a *Challenger!*" But that's the way that cookie Clayburn crumbled, Paul!

* * *

PEN PALS' POSTAL PICKINGS: "I think that you should publish the *Challengers* at least 8 times a year," Dan Fleming writes from Ottawa, Kans., echoing the sentiment of a lot of readers, "because a lot of us get tired waiting two months for such a good comic . . . I don't know how others feel about her, but personally I don't care too much about June. Maybe the girls like her, but to me, she's a man in a female form." . . . BUT Edna Peden pens from Dalton, Ga.: "I just love June. Can't you get her into some romantic stories?"

Richard Rogoz of Chicago wants our team to battle super-villains like Multi-Man, his all-time favorite, instead of aliens and creatures. They take 'em as they come, Dick! . . . That reply should satisfy you, too, George Lawson of N. Las Vegas, Nev., who urges our champs to challenge more space villains.

* * *

Mike Nolan of San Jose, Calif., has a complete set of the *Challengers of the Unknown*, and studies the development of our heroes from their origin to the present. He notes a vast improvement in the artwork of Bob Brown, who once pinch-hitted for Mort Meskin in *Vigilante*. . . . Incidentally, fans might be interested in knowing that Bob, a skilled musician who composes, arranges and plays a variety of instruments, has his own combo, which plays weekend dance dates on Long Island. . . . Add a free plug, too, for author France Herron's new photo book, "Blue Book of Social Cats," which recently made its appearance in bookstores throughout the country!

Among the best letters received were from Robert Baller of Brooklyn, N. Y.; Andrew Schafz, Chicago; Michael Janas, Charleston, S. C.; Helen Chase, Boston; Donald Bogen, Concord, N. H., and Arthur Heggen, Seattle.

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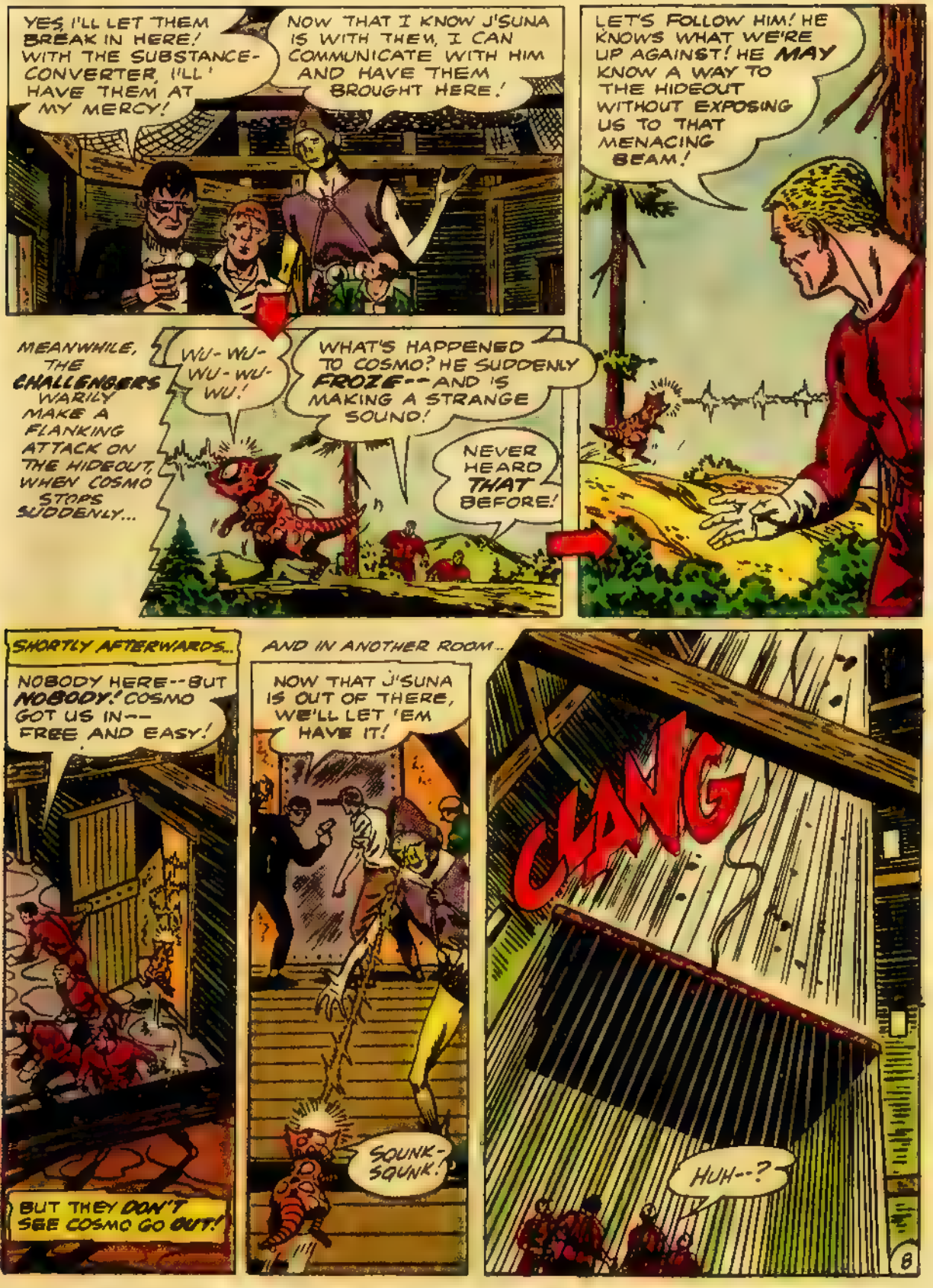
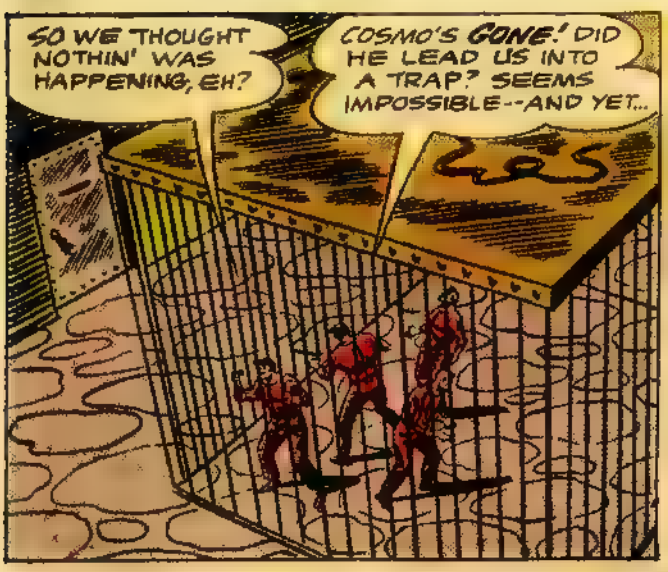
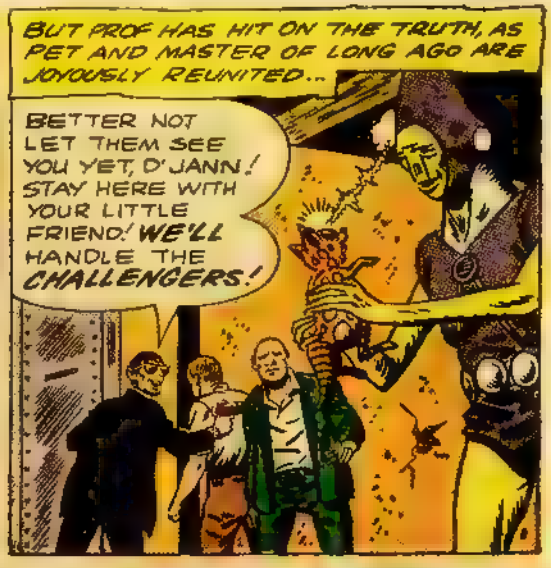
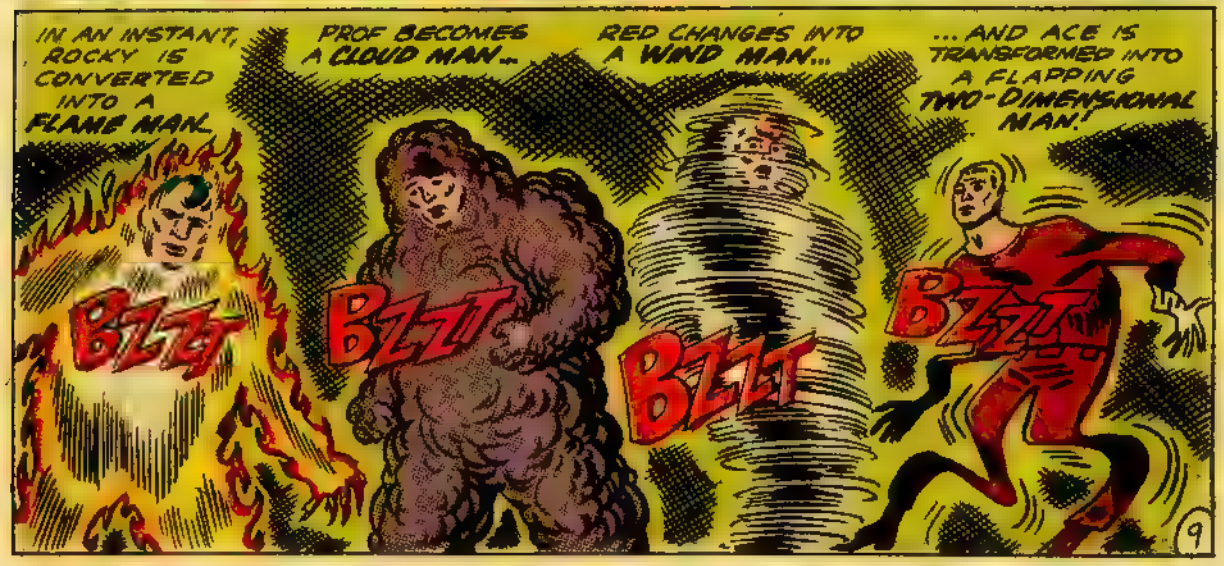

YES, I'LL LET THEM BREAK IN HERE! WITH THE SUBSTANCE-CONVERTER, I'LL HAVE THEM AT MY MERCY!
NOW THAT I KNOW J'SUNA IS WITH THEM, I CAN COMMUNICATE WITH HIM AND HAVE THEM BROUGHT HERE!
LET'S FOLLOW HIM! HE KNOWS WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST! HE MAY KNOW A WAY TO THE HIDEOUT WITHOUT EXPOSING US TO THAT MENACING BEAM!
MEANWHILE, THE CHALLENGERS WARILY MAKE A FLANKING ATTACK ON THE HIDEOUT, WHEN COSMO STOPS SUDDENLY...
WU-WU-WU-WU-WU!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO COSMO? HE SUDDENLY FROZE--AND IS MAKING A STRANGE SOUND!
NEVER HEARD THAT BEFORE!
SHORTLY AFTERWARDS...
NOBODY HERE--BUT NOBODY! COSMO GOT US IN--FREE AND EASY!
BUT THEY DON'T SEE COSMO GO OUT!
AND IN ANOTHER ROOM...
NOW THAT J'SUNA IS OUT OF THERE, WE'LL LET 'EM HAVE IT!
SQUNK-SQUNK!
CLANG
HUH--?
8

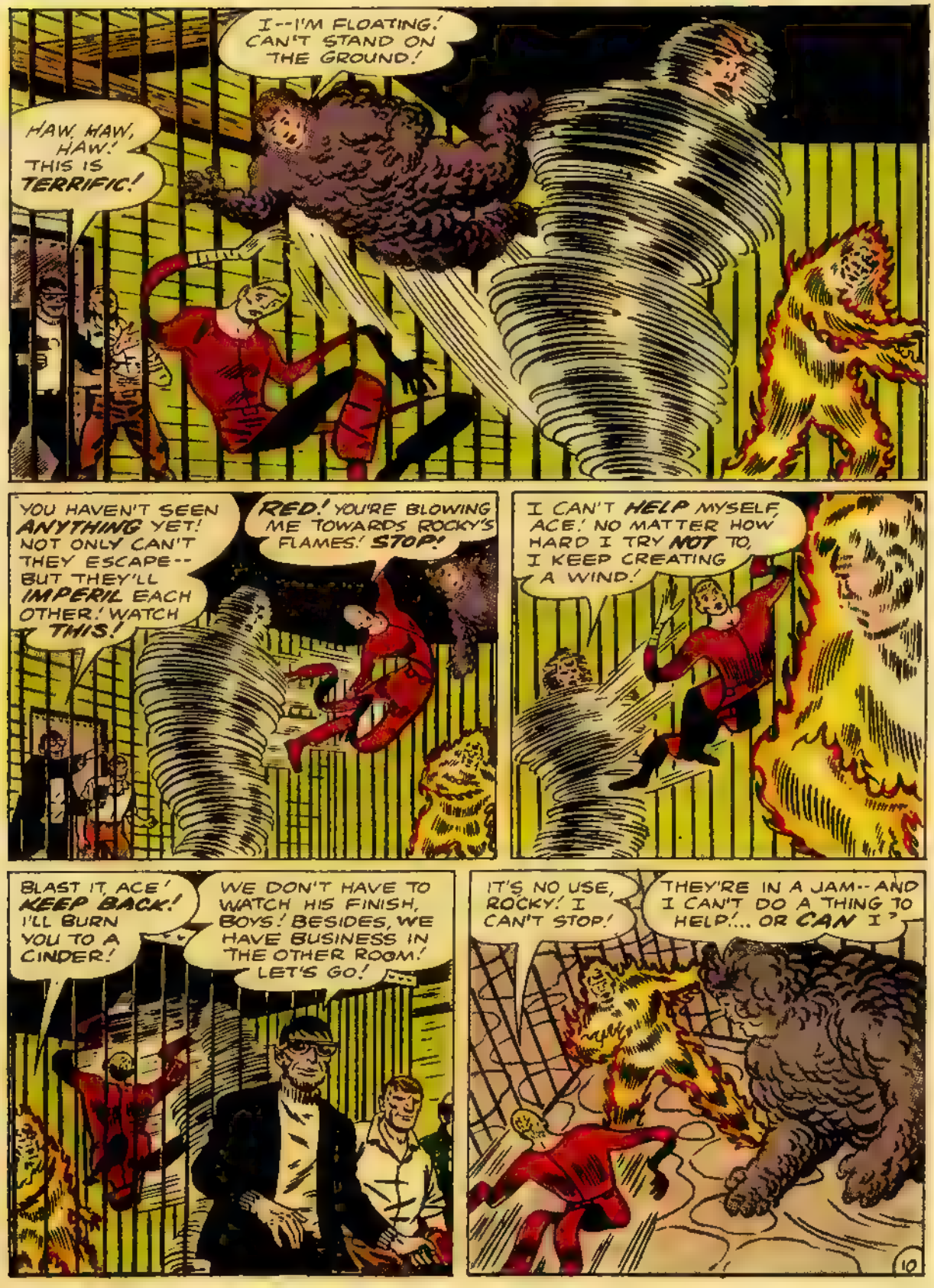

SO WE THOUGHT NOTHIN' WAS HAPPENING, EH?
COSMO'S GONE! DID HE LEAD US INTO A TRAP? SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE--AND YET...
405


BUT PROF HAS HIT ON THE TRUTH, AS PET AND MASTER OF LONG AGO ARE JOYOUSLY REUNITED..
BETTER NOT LET THEM SEE YOU YET, D'JANN! STAY HERE WITH YOUR LITTLE FRIEND! WE'LL HANDLE THE CHALLENGERS!

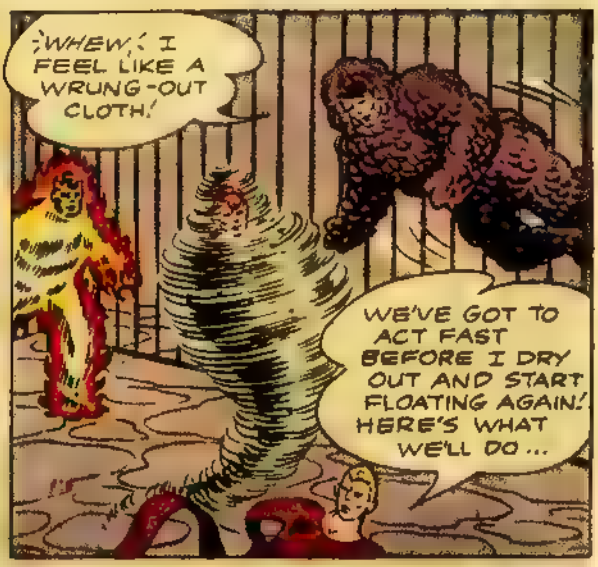
GREETINGS, CHUMPS! WITH THIS SUBSTANCE-CONVERTER, I MADE A CAGE--TO CATCH FOUR BIRDS!
WE'LL GET OUT OF HERE -- SOMEHOW--THEN I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU APART, SEAM BY SEAM!

LET'S SEE HOW FAR YOUR BOASTS GET YOU!
BZZT. BZZT

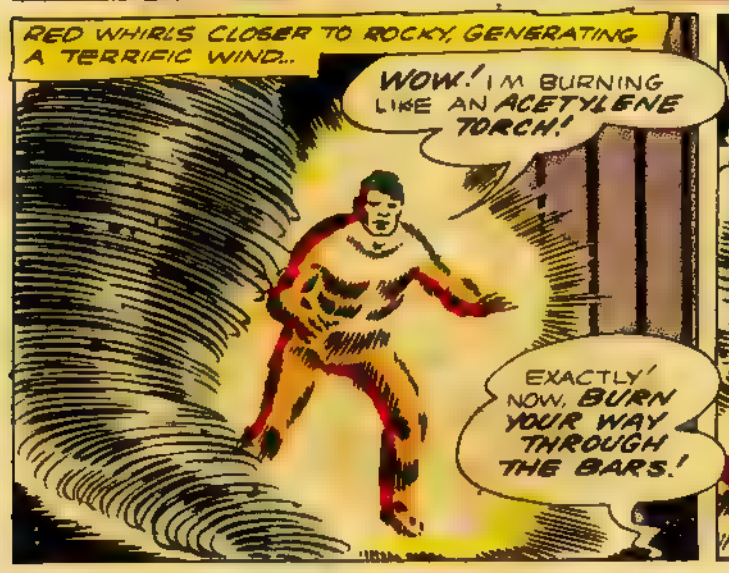

IN AN INSTANT, ROCKY IS CONVERTED INTO A FLAME MAN.
PROF BECOMES A CLOUD MAN..
RED CHANGES INTO A WIND MAN...
...AND ACE IS TRANSFORMED INTO A FLAPPING TWO-DIMENSIONAL MAN!
BZZT
BZZT
BZZT
BZZT
9


I--I'M FLOATING! CAN'T STAND ON THE GROUND!
HAW, HAW, HAW! THIS IS TERRIFIC!
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING YET! NOT ONLY CAN'T THEY ESCAPE-- BUT THEY'LL IMPERIL EACH OTHER! WATCH THIS!
RED! YOU'RE BLOWING ME TOWARDS ROCKY'S FLAMES! STOP!
I CAN'T HELP MYSELF, ACE! NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY NOT TO, I KEEP CREATING A WIND!
BLAST IT, ACE! KEEP BACK! I'LL BURN YOU TO A CINDER!
WE DON'T HAVE TO WATCH HIS FINISH, BOYS! BESIDES, WE HAVE BUSINESS IN THE OTHER ROOM! LET'S GO!
IT'S NO USE, ROCKY! I CAN'T STOP!
THEY'RE IN A JAM--AND I CAN'T DO A THING TO HELP!... OR CAN I?
10

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF HIS TRANSFORMATION, PROF WORKS UP A "RAINFALL"...
WHILE I'M DAMPENING ROCKY'S FLAMES, ACE--I MIGHT AS WELL SOAK YOU, TOO! MAYBE IT'LL KEEP YOU DOWN TILL WE SOLVE THIS PROBLEM!


WHEW! I FEEL LIKE A WRUNG-OUT CLOTH!
WE'VE GOT TO ACT FAST BEFORE I DRY OUT AND START FLOATING AGAIN! HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO...

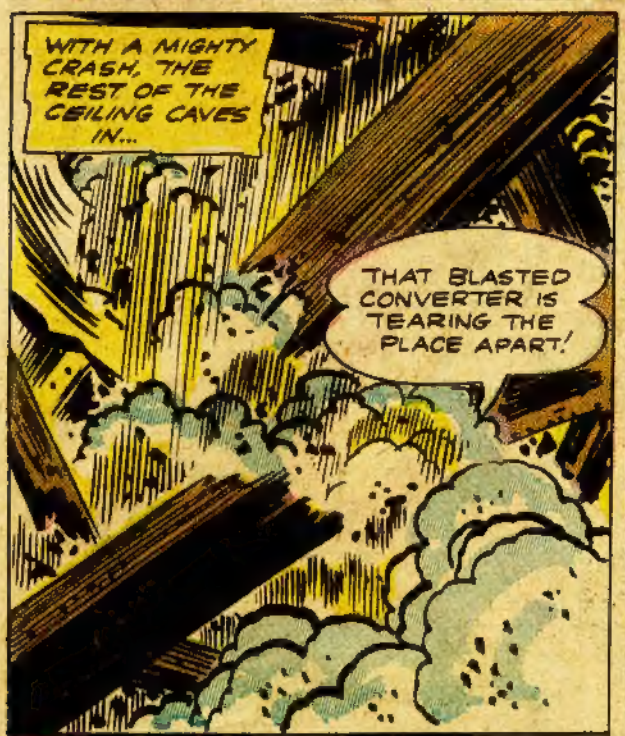
...BUT WE'VE GOT TO DO IT FAST! I'M ALREADY STARTING TO RISE! RED--LISTEN! GET OVER NEAR ROCKY! FAN HIS FLAMES AS HARD AS YOU CAN! WORK UP A GALE!


RED WHIRLS CLOSER TO ROCKY, GENERATING A TERRIFIC WIND...
WOW! I'M BURNING LIKE AN ACETYLENE TORCH!
EXACTLY! NOW, BURN YOUR WAY THROUGH THE BARS!

IT'S WORKIN', PALS! I'M GIVIN' IT ALL I'VE GOT--AN' I'M GOIN' THROUGH!
SSSS

ROCKY GOES THROUGH SO FAST THAT HE BURNS THROUGH TWO UPRIGHT BEAMS...
CRASH
YOW! DIDN'T STOP FAST ENOUGH.
WHROOSH

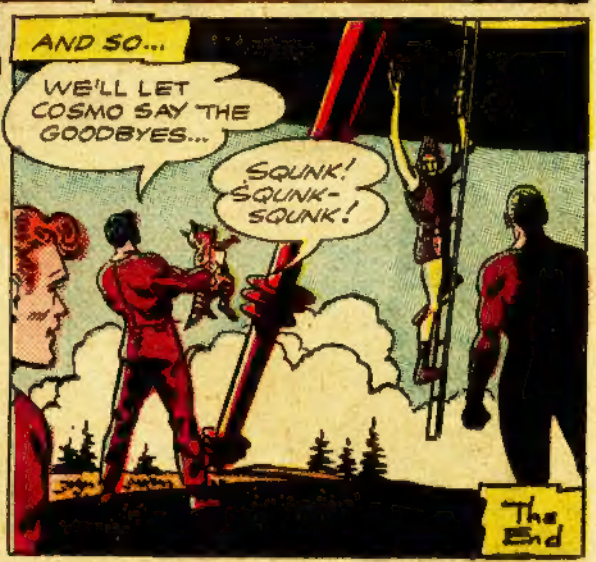
ALARMED BY THE NOISE, MASTER-MIND RUSHES OUT, BUT BEFORE HIS MIND CAN CONJURE UP A THOUGHT IMAGE TO TRANSFER TO THE CONVERTER...
BLLT
WHAT ABOUT A HOTFOOT, BUSTER?
OWW!


WITH A MIGHTY CRASH, THE REST OF THE CEILING CAVES IN...
THAT BLASTED CONVERTER IS TEARING THE PLACE APART!

HEARING ROCKY'S VOICE OUTSIDE, COSMO ATTEMPTS TO DART TO HIS SIDE, BUT...
VRROOOM

THEN, WHEN THE DUST CLEARS...
HE IS DEAD! WHO DID THIS THING?
WHO'S THAT GUY? AN' WHAT DOES HE MEAN, "DEAD?" IF COSMO'S HURT, I'LL --
WHO DID THIS?
THEY DID! THE CHALLENGERS, I TOLD YOU ABOUT! NOW I'LL EVEN THE SCORE FOR YOU!
NO--NOT YET! I HAVE OTHER PLANS FOR THEM! RIGHT NOW, I MUST ATTEND TO POOR J'SUNA! THERE ARE GREAT RESTORATIVE POWERS IN MY CRAFT!
AS THE ALIEN HURRIEDLY DEPARTS...
WHO IS THAT GUY? WHAT'S HE GOT TO DO WITH COSMO?
HE IS COSMO'S ORIGINAL MASTER! AND RIGHT NOW HE IS ON MY TEAM! WHEN HE RETURNS, IT WILL BE YOUR FINISH!

SO THAT'S IT! COSMO LED US INTO THIS TRAP! HE TEAMED UP WITH HIS FORMER MASTER--AGAINST US!
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE!
BUT IT'S TRUE, GENTLEMEN! AH--I HEAR D'JANN RETURNING NOW!..
COSMO'S ALIVE-- I'D LIKE TO GET MY MITTS ON THAT LITTLE DOUBLE-CROSSER!
HE WAS REVIVED BY POWERFUL MEDICINES CREATED BY OUR ADVANCED SCIENCE! AND NOW, IT SHALL BE HIS PRIVILEGE TO DOOM YOU!
J'SUNA! HURL A MIGHTY BLAST-RAY AT THE FOUR EARTHLINGS! SEND THEM YONDER TO DESTRUCTION!
VROOOOOOOOOOOSH
BUT I WANTED TO DESTROY THEM!
I KNOW--THAT IS WHY I HAD J'SUNA GET THEM OUT OF HERE BEFORE YOU DID SOMETHING FOOLISH WITH THE SUBSTANCE-CONVERTER--WHICH I'LL TAKE NOW!
YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE SECURITY OFFICERS, WHO WANTED TO CAPTURE THE CHALLENGERS-- BUT SINCE THEIR CAPTURE, YOU'VE TALKED OF NOTHING BUT THEIR DESTRUCTION! I SUSPECTED FOUL PLAY, AND WHEN J'SUNA RECOVERED, HE TOLD ME EVERYTHING...



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IN THE TWO LARGE YELLOW CIRCLES, WHICH CENTER DOT IS LARGER?

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